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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 AMMAN 002974

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [ECON](#) [JO](#) [PBIO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN: BIOS FOR BADRAN CABINET MEMBERS

REF: A. AMMAN 2890

[1](#)B. AMMAN 2969

[1](#)C. AMMAN 2973

Classified By: A/DCM Christopher Henzel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) Reflecting a trend (and the 11 ministers) carried over from the previous cabinet, Western-educated Muslim East Bankers dominate the newly-appointed 26-member cabinet of Prime Minister Adnan Badran (ref a). We count eight Jordanians of Palestinian origin (West Bankers), compared to only six in the cabinet of ex-PM Fayez. There are four women, and two members each from the minority Circassian Muslim and Christian communities (one of the women is Christian, another is Circassian). Similar to the previous cabinet, most of the East Bankers under Badran hail from the central and northern governorates of Jordan (prompting complaints from Southern and Badia district representatives in Parliament) (refs b and c). A little over half (14) of the ministers received degrees at American or European universities. This cabinet is not quite as "young" as the previous; the median age of the ministers is 55 (compared to 47 in the prior cabinet). The elder statesman of the group is the Prime Minister himself, who turns 70 this year. The minister of the Royal Court position, although traditionally one of the most influential players in the regime, is not technically part of the cabinet, and is not reflected in the statistics above. Its new incumbent, former PM and Deputy PM Marwan Muasher, is a Christian East Banker.

[1](#)2. (U) Members of the new cabinet are:

[1](#)A. Prime Minister and Defense Minister Adnan Badran:

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in Jerash in 1935, Dr. Badran received a bachelor's degree in science from Oklahoma State University in 1959. He later earned a master's degree (1961) and a Ph.D. (1963) from Michigan State University. After working as a research biochemist in the private sector for three years, Badran became a science professor at the University of Jordan in 1966 and was promoted to Dean of the Faculty of Science in 1971. He left the University of Jordan in 1976 to found and serve as President of Yarmouk University. From 1986-87, Badran was Secretary-General of the Higher Council for Science and Technology. He served as Minister of Agriculture from 1988-89, and as Minister of Education from 1989-90. Badran moved to Paris in 1990 to work with UNESCO, eventually serving as UNESCO Deputy Director-General from 1994 until 1998. Since 1998 he has been president of Philadelphia University, Jordan's premier private university. He speaks Arabic, English and French and has written numerous books and research papers in the fields of biology, economic development, education, and international cooperation. Badran is a Board Member of the Fulbright Commission in Amman, and he participated in the International Visitor Program in 1977. Badran is married with several children.

(C) Badran allegedly lost his position at Yarmouk because of a confrontation with radical Palestinian students that escalated over several weeks until the students had essentially gained control of the campus. The Jordanian security forces eventually intervened and quickly subdued the rebel students. In some East Bank circles, Badran is criticized for having let this crisis get out of hand.

[1](#)B. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Political Development Hisham al-Tel:

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1943 in Irbid, al-Tel earned a BA in Law from Damascus University in 1964. Upon graduation, he practiced law until he was appointed as a judge at the Supreme Court of Justice in February 1991. He served as legal adviser to several ministries and public and private establishments. Al-Tel was appointed Minister of Justice by former MP Zaid Ben Shaker in 1994. He was appointed as chairman of the legislative board at the Prime Ministry on October 27, 2004, where he served until his current appointment.

(SBU) Al-Tel is reportedly the principal author of the draft law on political parties currently under review in committee at the Parliament. A factor in his selection for this job is his apparent ability to deal effectively with Parliament.

[1](#)C. Minister of Finance Bassem Awadallah:

(U) Muslim, West Banker. Born in 1964, Awadallah obtained a BA in International Economics with honors from Georgetown University in 1984. He earned an MA and a PhD in economics, both from the London School of Economics. From 1988-1990, he worked as finance manager of the EDGO Group in London. Awadallah subsequently served as Finance and Project Development Manager for the New Work Co. Ltd. in Amman and then as economic adviser to Prime Minister Tawarneh. In 1999, Awadallah became Director of the Economic Department of the Royal Court. Awadallah played a key role in Jordan-Israel peace negotiations. He was appointed Minister of Planning in October 2001, a position he held continuously until his resignation in February 2005. Awadallah is not married.

(C) Awadallah, who has significantly influenced the direction of Jordan's economic reform program since 1999, is particularly close to the King, and therefore has a strong sense of empowerment. Informed sources report that the announcement of the new cabinet was delayed on April 7 due to a last minute bid by Awadallah to add the title of Deputy Prime Minister to his position.

**D. Minister of Social Development Abdullah al-Uwaidat:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1948 in Mafraq, Uwaidat earned a BA in Arabic language from Baghdad University in 1969, an MA in Education from Jordan University in 1977, and an MA in Educational Planning and a PhD in Social Education from the University of California in Los Angeles. He served as Minister of Youth, Culture and Antiquities in 1984-1985, and was again appointed Minister of Youth in 1993.

**E. Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdel Salam al-Abadi:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1943 in Amman, Abadi earned a BA in Islamic Sharia from Damascus University in 1963, and his MA and PhD in comparative jurisprudence from al-Azhar University in Egypt in 1968 and 1972, respectively. He joined Jordan University's Shari'ah faculty in 1972, and served as Dean of Students until 1982. He was appointed Under Secretary of the Ministry of Awqaf from 1982-1988. Abadi was director general of the Corporation for Managing the Orphans Fund from 1988-1993. He also has served as Secretary General of the Jordanian Hashemite Charity

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Organization. Abadi has served as Awqaf Minister under several former prime ministers, including: Majali (1993), Shaker (1996), Majali (1997), Tarawneh (1998) Rawabdeh (1999) and Abul Ragheb (2000). He left the cabinet during the first reshuffle of Abul Ragheb's cabinet in June 2001. Abadi has served as president of Al al-Bayt University since December 2004. He is married with four daughters and one son.

(C) Observers have noted that the current disarray in the official religious establishment -- marked by recurring allegations that the former Awqaf Minister was corrupt, accused of having business interests in companies that transported pilgrims to the hajj, for example. The King may look to Abadi to bolster the weak Awqaf Ministry, which is seen as ineffective thus far in countering effectively the growing threat of radical streams of Islam present in Jordan.

**F. Minister of Municipal Affairs Tawfiq Kreishan:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1947 in Ma'an, Kreishan earned a BSc in Business Administration and Accounting from the Arab University of Beirut in 1972. He headed the Audit Department at the Jordan Petroleum Refinery for a time, and served as president of the Arab University of Beirut Alumni Club for two consecutive terms. He was elected to the Lower House of Parliament in 1993, serving until 1997. He was then appointed Minister of Rural Affairs in Majali's cabinet in 1997, and again in Tarawneh's cabinet in August 1998. He also served as Minister of Municipal, Rural, and Environment Affairs and Minister of Parliament Affairs under Rawabdeh in March 1999. He was again appointed as Minister of Parliamentary Affairs in Abul Ragheb's third cabinet in 2003.

**G. Minister of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research Khalid Touqan:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1954 in Amman, Touqan obtained a BS from the American University of Beirut, an MA from Michigan State University, and a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Prior to entering government service, he served as head of the Nuclear Engineering Department and as Dean of the Department of Engineering and Technology at the University of Jordan, as well as President of al-Balqa'a Applied Science University. He has served as Minister of Education since his appointment by Abul Ragheb in June 2000. Touqan has worked closely with

the Embassy on various aspects of education reform. With the latest Cabinet change, his portfolio has now expanded. Touqan is also now responsible for Higher Education and Scientific Research, previously a separate ministry. He is married with two sons and a daughter.

(C) Touqan's strong academic and reformist credentials, coupled with his experience as Education Minister since 2000, should help him as he pursues his goal of introducing civic education in Jordan's public schools. His continued tenure as Education Minister, with the added portfolio of Higher Education and Scientific Research, is a vote of confidence in Touqan's performance so far. He is well respected for his serious focus on reform of the education sector. However, he is not bureaucratically astute, as administration is not one of his strong points.

**H. Minister of State for Legal Affairs Abed al-Shakhanbeh:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1950 in Madaba, Shakhanbeh obtained his BA in Law from Damascus University in 1971, his MA in law from the University of Jordan in 1987 and a PhD from Cairo University in 1992. He worked in the Ministry of Justice from 1973 until 1992 when he was appointed Secretary General of the Inspection and Control Department. He became director of the department in 1995 and served there until his appointment as Minister of State for Legal Affairs in 2001. He was appointed to the same position again in 2003. After that he served as an advocate and a lecturer at Amman Private University.

**I. Minister of State for Monitoring Government Performance Salah al-Bashir:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1966, Bashir obtained a BA in Law from the University of Jordan in 1987, a law degree from Harvard Law School, and a PhD in Civil Law from McGill University in 1996. Bashir began his career as a research assistant at McGill and went on to become an adjunct professor of law at the University of Jordan in 1996. In 1997, he was appointed managing partner of Abu Ghazaleh Legal Services, and served as legal advisor on international affairs and director of the firm's legal department, before forming his own firm, International Business Law Associates. Bashir was appointed to King Abdullah's 20-member Economic Consultative Council in 1999. He served as Minister of Trade and Industry under Abul Ragheb from October 2001-July 2003. Bashir served as Minister of Justice in the Fayez Cabinet from October 2003 until the present. Bashir speaks excellent English and is married with children.

(C) Bashir's legal background, role in designing many key economic reform policies, experience as Minister of Industry and Trade, and his stint as Justice Minister have afforded him good experience to prepare him for his new position. Bashir is the legal architect of many of Jordan's key economic reforms, especially in commercial and regulatory areas, on which he worked closely with USAID-supported projects. He has a reputation for theoretical brilliance, micro-management, and poor administration. As Justice Minister, his temper showed during a number of sharp exchanges with deputies in the Lower House of Parliament.

**J. Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Alia Hatough-Bouran:**

(U) Muslim, Circassian, East Banker. Born in Na'our, Dr. Bouran obtained her BS and MS in applied environmental studies from Moscow State University. She earned a PhD in ecology and environmental sciences in 1983 from the Russian Academy of Science. Dr. Bouran is a natural resources specialist, ecologist and conservation strategist, and has authored more than 20 publications in the field. She served as an associate professor of ecological sciences and headed the environmental unit at the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan. Dr. Bouran served as Jordan's National Coordinator for the World Conservation Union, a leading global NGO working on sustainable development. She also headed the environment section of the National Task Force for Children, a commission under the supervision of Queen Noor. She was senior advisor on environmental affairs at the Foreign Ministry before becoming Secretary General at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in June 1998. Bouran served in Brussels as Jordan's Ambassador to Belgium and the EU beginning in 2001. She held the title of Minister of Tourism and Antiquities and Minister of Environment until October 2004, when the portfolio was split and she retained the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities. Bouran is married with children.

(C) Bouran worked closely with USAID in the development of Jordan's new tourism strategy and is generally seen as a competent counterpart.

**K. Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Azmi Khreisat:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1956, Khreisat holds an MA

in electrical engineering from Manchester University in the UK. He served as director of the Department of Industrial Power at the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources before he became secretary general in October 2001. Khreisat has been director general of the Jordanian Petroleum Refinery since April 2003. Khreisat has been a good contact of the Embassy, both as secretary general and at the refinery company. He has worked closely with the Trade and Development Agency on TDA-supported projects. Khreisat was appointed Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources in the Fayez cabinet in October 2003. He is married with three children.

(C) Through his government and business experience in the energy field, Khreisat has earned a reputation for efficiency and good decision-making.

**L. Minister of Water and Irrigation Ra'ed Abu al-Saud:**

(U) Muslim, West Banker. Born in 1957 in Amman, Abu Saud obtained his BA in civil engineering from the University of Miami. From 1982-1999, he managed several investment projects in Jordan and abroad. He headed the administration and planning unit at the Ministry of Water from 2000-2003, and directly supervised the rehabilitation of Amman's water networks. He was appointed as Minister of Public Works and Housing and Minister of Transport in October 2003. In October 2004, his portfolio was divided, leaving him the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, which he held until April 2005. Abu Saud studied English at the Embassy's American Language Center to improve his public speaking ability.

(C) Known to the Embassy as an effective professional in his former job as head of the Project Management Unit at the Water Ministry, Abu Saud is not considered by most as "politically connected," although he has very close personal relations to General Intelligence Director Sa'ad Kheir, as well as Finance Minister Awadallah.

**M. Minister of Culture Asma Khader:**

(U) Christian, West Banker. Prior to her government career, Khader was known as a leading women's and human rights activist. Khader was the general coordinator of the Sisterhood is Global Institute (SIGI), a non-profit human rights organization, and a member of the human rights organization Mizan. She served as former president of the Jordanian Women's Union and member of the Arab Lawyers' Union. Khader also is the founder of the National Network for Poverty Alleviation. She won the UNDP Poverty Eradication Award for 2003. She was appointed Minister of State and Government Spokesperson in October 2003. When PM Fayez reshuffled his cabinet in October 2004, she became Minister of Culture, but still retained her position as GOJ spokesperson (a title she no longer holds in the Badran cabinet).

(C) The appointment of a well-known human rights activist like Khader in 2003 signaled the King's goal of invigorating the role of NGOs and civil society in Jordan. However, frequent blunders as government spokesperson, coupled with her brusque style, probably was a factor in the decision to strip her of the spokesperson role.

**N. Minister of Health Sa'id Darwazeh:**

(U) Muslim, West Banker. Born in Kuwait in 1957, he obtained his BS in industrial engineering in the U.S. and a masters in business administration from INSEAD, the elite international business program in France. He was president of the family-owned Hikma Pharmaceuticals Company from 1995-2003. Hikma is probably the most successful Jordanian pharmaceutical company to prosper under Jordan's new intellectual property regime. It has obtained FDA and EU approval for exports to the United States and to Europe and invested in a New Jersey-based subsidiary. Considered a unique choice for Jordan's Health Ministry at the time given his business background, Darwazeh has served as Minister of Health in the Fayez cabinet since October 2003.

(C) Darwazeh's business background has helped him address some of the difficulties faced by international drug companies when registering and protecting their products in Jordan, as well as to reform the over-staffed and inefficient public healthcare system. We expect Darwazeh to continue focusing on developing Jordan's potential as a regional center for advanced medical care. He has worked well with USAID on our large health reform programs.

**O. Minister of Agriculture Yusef al-Shureiqi:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1948 in Amman, Shureiqi obtained his BA in 1972 from the University of Alexandria, Egypt, specializing in agricultural sciences. In 1980, he received his MA from the American University of Beirut and a

PhD in toxicology from Bonn University in Germany in 1987. Shureiqi held various posts at the Ministry of Agriculture commencing in 1972 as a researcher and then as head of the toxins department. From 1993 to 2001, Shureiqi was seconded to the Omani government to serve as an expert and to head the pesticides department. Upon returning to Jordan, he was appointed as chancellor at the prime ministry. In 2003, Shureiqi was appointed secretary general of the Ministry of Environment, a post he held until he was sworn in as Environment Minister in October 2004.

**P. Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology Nadia al-Sa'id:**

(U) Muslim, West Banker. Born in 1965 in Kuwait, Sa'id earned a bachelor's degree in economy and business from the University of Jordan and a master's degree from the American University in Cairo. She worked in the public sector for 10 years, mainly in the banking and technology fields, before she was hired by the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology on a special contract as senior advisor to the Minister. Sa'id served as acting secretary general since early 2003, and became secretary general when PM Fayez's government was formed in October 2003. She was promoted to the position of Minister during the Fayez cabinet re-shuffle in October 2004.

(C) While generally regarded as bright, Sa'id is not considered as a "go-getter."

**Q. Minister of Transport Saud Nsairat:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1950 in Natfeh in Irbid Governorate, Nsairat joined the Air Force upon his graduation from high school and was trained as a pilot. While serving in the army, he earned a master's degree in military affairs management. From 1992 to 1994, he served as Jordan's military attache to Paris. A career officer, Nsairat became Air Force commander in the Jordan Armed Forces in 1999, serving in that position until 2002 when he was promoted to vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He retired on October 1, 2004, and was appointed Minister of Transport later that month. He is married and has two sons and one daughter.

**R. Minister of State for Development of the Public Sector Taysir al-Smadi:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1966, Smadi graduated from Yarmouk University with a bachelor's degree in Economics. He obtained a master's degree in economics from the University from Jordan and holds a PhD in economics from Utah State University, majoring in International Trade and Economic Development. Smadi held various posts at the Planning Ministry, including director of the Studies and Policies Department and Acting Director of the Human Resources Department. He also served in the Central Bank of Jordan and the Arab Fund for Socio-Economic Development, as well as the boards of the Industrial Development Bank, the Central Electric Generating Company and the Jordan Investment Board. Smadi was appointed secretary general at the Planning Ministry in May 2004, and was promoted to the position of Minister after the resignation of Bassem Awadallah in February 2005. Smadi is married.

**S. Minister of Justice Muhammad Ali al-'Alawneh:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1939 in Irbid, Alawneh holds a law degree from Damascus University. He occupied several judicial posts in his career, serving as president of the Higher Court of Justice and the Attorney General's Department, secretary general at the Ministry of Justice, attorney general in Irbid, and president of Irbid's Court of First Instance.

**T. Minister of Interior Awni Yarfes:**

(U) Muslim, Circassian, East Banker. Born in 1941, Yarfes obtained a BA in law from the University of Damascus. He then served at the General Intelligence Department, ascending through the ranks until he was promoted to major general. From 1996 until his appointment as Minister of Interior, he served as director general of the Civil Status and Passports Department.

(C) Alawneh is held in high regard among his peers, including General Intelligence Director Sa'ad Kheir.

**U. Minister of Foreign Affairs Farouq al-Qasrawi:**

(U) Muslim, West Banker. Born in 1942, Qasrawi obtained a BA in literature from the American University of Beirut in 1962, an MA in economics from London University in 1976 and an MA in philosophy from George Washington University in 1980. He has held several ambassadorial posts in his career, including in Germany and Japan. He served as director of the



Institute of Diplomacy from 2003 until his appointment as Minister. Qasrawi also was an advisor at the Royal Court. He is married to a Jordanian of Circassian descent and has children.

**V. Minister of Public Works and Housing Yusef Hiyasat:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1949 in Salt, Hiyasat earned a BSc in Civil Engineering from Mosul University in 1971. He held several other positions with private and public organizations. From 1999 until his appointment as minister, he was general manager of Beit al-Mal for Savings and Investment for Housing (Beitna).

**W. Minister of Industry and Trade Sharif al-Zu'bi:**

(U) Muslim, West Banker. Born in 1963 in Amman, Zu'bi obtained a BA in law and an MA in commercial law from the University of Bristol in 1984 and 1985, respectively. He has been an advocate and managing partner for Ali Sharif Zu'bi and Sharif Ali Zu'bi Law Firm since 1985 where he has focused his own practice on advising the government regarding tenders and contracts on large infrastructure projects. Zu'bi is a member of numerous boards and professional associations, including the Board of Governors of the Central Bank of Jordan, Royal Jordanian airlines, King Hussein Cancer Center, and Jordan Micro Credit Company. He has published articles and spoken at international conferences on judicial reform. Zu'bi has authored guides on doing business in Jordan and the Middle East, such as the Companies' Registration Guide, which was commissioned by USAID and prepared in association with Allied Accountants/Arthur Anderson. He is fluent in Arabic and English.

**X. Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Suheir al-Ali:**

(U) Muslim, West Banker. Al-Ali holds a master's degree in development economics from Georgetown University. She served as general manager of the Saudi American Bank Representative Office from 1993 until 1996, when she became general manager and country officer of Citigroup in Jordan. Al-Ali, who is married with children, is the daughter of Embassy Amman's long-time Arabic language instructor.

**Y. Minister of Environment Khalid al-Irani:**

(U) Muslim, East Banker. Born in 1964, Irani earned a BSc and MSc from the University of Jordan. Formerly a research assistant at the University of Jordan and manager of the Protected Areas Department at the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), Irani has served since 1996 as director general for RSCN. He has worked closely with USAID on numerous projects. He is married and has two children.

(C) Irani is seen as an "idea guy" more than an administrator. He is very bright, presentable, and close to the Palace, given his extensive work with RSCN.

**Z. Minister of Labor Bassem al-Salem:**

(U) Christian, East Banker. Born in 1956 in al-Husn (Irbid Governorate) and son of the late former Senator and Central Bank Governor Khalil al-Salem, Bassem al-Salem earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of London in 1979. Upon his return to Jordan in the early 1980s, he started a manufacturing plant to produce plastics and packaging materials. He expanded his business into several manufacturing facilities, including confectioneries, as well as founding a trading company. He recently acquired one of the smaller mining operations that was privatized by the government. In the mid-1990s, he co-founded the Jordan Export and Finance bank, and still serves on its board. He also served as board member of the Central Bank of Jordan.

(C) Salem has recently concentrated his legal work on GOJ government contracts, especially tenders on big infrastructure projects, including USAID-funded projects. He has a cosmopolitan outlook, displays an obvious love for the law, and can converse easily on diverse subjects such as regional Arab artists. He travels to England regularly, and is on a first-name basis with Marwan Muasher, the newly-appointed Royal Court Minister.

**3. (U) Minimize considered.**

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